World Conference of Ministers
Responsible for Youth

Lisbon, Portugal
8-12 August 1998

Portuguese Republic

United Nations

Distr.
LIMITED

WCMRY/1998/L.1
27 July 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Item 11 of the provisional agenda*

ADOPTION OF THE LISBON DECLARATION
ON YOUTH POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

Draft Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes

Note by the Conference secretariat

The draft Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes, as approved by the third session of the informal intergovernmental consultations, is hereby transmitted to the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth for further consideration.

DRAFT LISBON DECLARATION ON YOUTH POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

We, the Governments participating in the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth, convened by the Government of the Portuguese Republic in cooperation with the United Nations, gathered in Lisbon from 8 to 12 August 1998,

Mindful that both the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 52/83 and the United Nations Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1997/55 have welcomed the offer of the Government of Portugal to host a World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth in cooperation with the United Nations and have requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations to make the report of the World Conference available to all States Members of the United Nations,

Recalling the achievements of International Youth Year in 1985 and the special sessions of the General Assembly on youth in 1985 and 1995 leading to

* WCMRY/1998/1.

98-21842 (E) 300798

/...

the adoption of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond,[1]

Recalling that, as suggested in paragraph 123 of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, the General Assembly invited regional and interregional conferences of ministers responsible for youth to intensify cooperation among each other and to consider meeting regularly at the international level under the aegis of the United Nations to provide a global dialogue on youth-related issues,

Taking note of and acknowledging the reports of the second[2] and third[3] sessions of the World Youth Forum of the United Nations System, held in Vienna 1996 and Braga, Portugal, 1998,

Recalling also that the General Assembly in paragraph 124 of the Programme of Action invited youth-related bodies and organizations of the United Nations system to cooperate with the regional and interregional conferences and that such bodies and organizations have made contributions to those meetings as well as to this World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth,

Recognizing the efforts made by our Governments and societies to respond more effectively to the economic, social, educational, emotional, cultural and spiritual needs of young people and their problems,

Recognizing that youth are a positive force in society and have enormous potential for contributing to development and the advancement of societies,

Recognizing the urgency of creating more and better jobs for young women and young men and the central role of youth employment in facilitating the transition from school to work, thereby reducing crime and drug abuse and ensuring participation and social cohesion,

Noting with concern the situation of youth living in poverty, as well as the special difficulties experienced by different groups of young women and young men such as those involved in or affected by unemployment, drug and substance abuse, violence, including gender-based violence, neglect, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation; **[young women and young men living under foreign occupation]**; youth involved in armed conflicts; refugees and other migrant young people; displaced and parentless youth; young women and young men living with disabilities; indigenous youth; ethnic and cultural youth minorities; young offenders; pregnant adolescents; and other disadvantaged and marginalized young women and young men,

Taking note of the achievements made since the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing 1995, and bearing in mind the constraints and obstacles that still impede the full participation of women in all sectors of society, and particularly that of girls and young women,

---

[1] General Assembly resolution 50/81, annex.

[2] A/52/80-E/1997/14, annex.

[3] To be issued as WCMRY/1998/5.

Having regard for the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[4] the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights[5] and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,[5] and having regard also for the progress achieved in the implementation by States parties of other human rights instruments and standards such as the Declaration on the Right to Development,[6] the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[7] and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[8]

Also having regard for the recommendations arising from major United Nations conferences, including the World Summit for Children, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the World Conference on Human Rights, the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), and the World Conference on Education for All, which adopted the Declaration on Education for All, the World Food Summit, which adopted the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and Plan of Action, and the International Labour Conference at its 86th session, which adopted the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work,

Recognizing that the formulation and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes and actions in favour of young women and young men are the responsibility of each country and should take into account the economic, social and environmental diversity of conditions in each country, with full respect for the various religious and ethical values, cultural backgrounds and philosophical convictions of its people, and in conformity with all human rights and fundamental freedoms,

WE THEREFORE COMMIT OURSELVES TO:

NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY

1. Ensuring that national youth policy formulation, implementation and follow-up processes are, at appropriate level, accorded commitment from the highest political levels, including the provision of adequate levels of resources;

2. Developing national youth policies and operational programmes, at appropriate levels, to implement the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, taking into account the national priorities, realities and limitations arising from different socio-economic and cultural development contexts;

---

[4] General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).

[5] General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[6] General Assembly resolution 41/128, annex.

[7] General Assembly resolution 34/180, annex.

[8] General Assembly resolution 44/25, annex.

3. Establishing the necessary policies and programmes by the year 2000 to improve living standards for young women and young men and to permit the effective implementation of national youth policies, of an intersectoral nature, foreseen, among others, in the Programme of Action;

4. Reviewing the situation of youth and their needs and incorporating young people's own assessment of priorities, through their participation in a consultative process, and ensuring that young women and young men actively contribute to the formulation, implementation and evaluation of national and local youth policies, programmes and action plans;

5. Developing capacity building through the empowerment of formal and informal coalitions and networks of youth;

6. Strengthening responsible partnerships among all key stakeholders, especially youth networks, non-governmental youth institutions and organizations and other non-governmental organizations also including young women, particularly the girl-child, and young men, their families, governments, international agencies, educational institutions, civil society, the business sector and media in order to create synergies to better address youth potentials and problems both at national and at local levels;

7. Introducing measurable time-bound goals and indicators to allow a common basis for national evaluation of the implementation of the above-mentioned policies;

8. Supporting bilateral, subregional, regional and international exchange of best practices at the national level in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of youth policy, and the provision of appropriate development tools and technical assistance, through the creation of networks;

9. Ensuring the mainstreaming of national youth policy and international development, plans and programmes;

PARTICIPATION

10. Ensuring and encouraging the active participation of youth in all spheres of society and in decision-making processes at the national, regional and international levels and ensuring that the necessary gender-sensitive measure are taken in order to attain equal access of young women and young men and by creating the conditions necessary for the fulfilment of their civic duties;

11. Promoting education, training in democratic processes and the spirit of citizenship and civic responsibility of young women and young men with the view to strengthening and facilitating their commitment to, participation in and full integration into society;

12. Facilitating access by youth to legislative and policy-making bodies, through their representatives, in order to involve them closely in the formulation, execution, follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of youth activities and programmes and to ensure their participation in development;

13. Upholding and reinforcing policies that allow independent and democratic forms of associative life, including the elimination of identified obstacles to youth participation and to freedom of association in the work place;

14. Giving higher priority to marginalized, vulnerable and disadvantaged young women and young men, especially those who are separated from their families and children living and/or working in the streets, with adequate programmes, actions and necessary funding, inter alia, in order to provide them with the means and motivation to contribute effectively to their societies;

15. Giving priority to the building of communication channels with youth in order to give them a voice, at the national, regional and international levels, and to give them the information they need to help them prepare for participation and leadership roles;

16. Encouraging youth voluntarism as an important form of youth participation;

DEVELOPMENT

17. Ensuring the right to development of all young women and young men;

18. Promoting access of young women and young men to land, credit, technologies and information, thereby enhancing the opportunities and development resources of young people living within rural and remote communities;

19. Ensuring actions to promote equal access to and use of new information technologies by young women and young men once those are a privileged instrument to progressively reduce or eliminate inequalities and foster development;

20. Enhancing the role of youth organizations in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of national development plans and programmes;

21. Establishing or strengthening, as appropriate, a policy to combat poverty and ensuring actions on the alleviation of poverty, and recognizing the needs of young women and young men to adequate housing by ensuring safe, healthy and secure living and environmental and working conditions, including shelter, and to integrate youth concerns into all relevant national and local policies and programmes by supporting the ability of youth to play an active and creative role in the management and development of human settlements so that they can effectively contribute to the improvement of living and environmental conditions not only for themselves but also for their communities and society at large;

22. Encouraging awareness and commitment among young women and young men to sustainable development principles and practices, especially in regard to environmental protection, and supporting the actions of youth in promoting those principles in cooperation between countries, based on their mutual needs and common interests;

23. Recalling that the family unit has a vital role to play in the integration of youth into society by acting as an agent of transition, a facilitator of learning and education, a provider of emotional and economic

support, a transmitter of values and a contributor to the formation and development of young women and young men as responsible adults; specific programmes and mechanisms should be created or reinforced within an integrated perspective of families;

24. Recognizing the need for a gender-balanced perspective in line with the concerns identified by the Economic and Social Council during the operational activities for development segment of its 1998 substantive session;

25. Encouraging bilateral, regional and international cooperation to create an enabling environment at the national and international levels in order to ensure the full participation of young women and young men in economic and social development;

PEACE

26. Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security, namely by taking effective collective measures against different forms of violence and any threat to peace by suppressing acts of aggression and by promoting a peaceful resolution of disputes, in conformity with the principles of justice and international law;

26 BIS [Bearing in mind the important role of youth in promoting peace and non-violence, measures should be taken in accordance with the relevant provisions of international law, including international standards of human rights, aiming at preventing the participation and involvement of youth in all acts of violence, [particularly acts of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as distinguished from the just struggle of peoples for their liberation,] xenophobia and racism, and trafficking in arms and drugs;]

27. Strengthening the role of youth and youth organizations in peace building, conflict prevention and conflict resolution, inter alia, on the basis of the resolutions and treaties of the United Nations and the Security Council and the promotion of intercultural learning, civic education, tolerance, human rights education and democracy towards mutual respect for cultural, ethnic and religious diversity, responsibility, solidarity and international cooperation, as a means of preventing conflicts and distressed circumstances;

28. Encouraging, as appropriate, the role of youth in working towards general and complete disarmament under effective international control, including disarmament of all types of weapons of mass destruction;

29. Building an effective culture of peace and tolerance by putting into practice a global system of education and training for peace, aimed at social progress, fighting inequalities and recognizing the importance of dialogue and cooperation behind lines of conflict, in order to promote tolerance, respect and mutual understanding;

30. Assisting youth and youth organizations in making a substantial input into the celebration of the International Year for the Culture of Peace in the year 2000;

31. Preventing the participation, involvement and recruitment of children in armed conflicts, in accordance with international law;

32. **[Promoting and protecting the rights of youth living under colonial or other forms of alien domination or foreign occupation, particularly their right to self determination and national liberation;]**

33. Mobilizing youth for the reconstruction of areas devastated by war, bringing help to refugees and war victims and promoting reconciliation and rehabilitation activities;

34. Ensuring that young women and young men live within an environment free from threat, conflict, all forms of violence, maltreatment and exploitation;

EDUCATION

35. Promoting education in all its aspects, namely formal and non-formal education, as well as functional literacy and training for young women and young men and life-long learning, thereby facilitating the integration of youth into the labour market;

36. Guaranteeing to young women and young men equal access to and continuity of basic good quality education, especially in rural areas and among the urban poor, aimed at eradicating illiteracy;

37. Setting national time-bound goals for the expansion of equal access for young women and young men to secondary and higher education and for the improvement of the quality of that education;

38. Ensuring that young women and young men are well informed about their human rights, inter alia, through education;

39. Offering adequate training in modern communication techniques and in media literacy as they have an impact on youth and their behaviour;

40. Providing for the rehabilitation and, where appropriate, the reintegration of young women and young men from juvenile detention and incarceration into society, especially in the educational setting;

41. Designing new strategies focusing on youth in distress and in violent circumstances, aimed at ending exclusion, offering renewed learning opportunities for early school leavers and continuous learning and training opportunities for both employed and unemployed youth;

42. Supporting family structures, especially assistance to the poor, and providing the necessary resources to family and schools dealing with young women and young men with physical and mental disabilities;

43. Reinforcing and designing new partnerships to enable young women and young men to learn, create and express themselves through cultural, physical and sports activities for the benefit of their balanced physical, intellectual, artistic, moral, emotional and spiritual development, as well as their social integration;

44. Allocating resources to vocational training and ensuring that education and training systems correspond to economic, social and entrepreneurial realities based on identified needs and technological advancements;

45. Developing education policies that support all young women and young men in gaining access to an education that corresponds to their specific capacities and potentials, while paying special attention to socially disadvantaged youth;

46. Encouraging the inclusion of issues such as family life education, reproductive health, including the adverse consequences of traditional practices that are harmful to the health of young women and girls, and drug and substance abuse prevention in the design of school curricula, as well as in extracurricular activities;

47. Encouraging youth participation in community work as an important part of the education system;

48. Supporting, as appropriate, students' organizations by creating the conditions for the exercise of their rights and providing them with the necessary means to enable them to discharge their roles and responsibilities;

49. Establishing and developing sport, cultural and recreational activities among young women and young men aimed at promoting and strengthening sport and cultural exchanges at the national, subregional, regional and international levels;

EMPLOYMENT

50. Affirming the ultimate societal goal of full employment so as to ensure that equal opportunities are available to young women and young men for income-earning work;

51. Promoting equal employment opportunities for young people as well as equal protection against discrimination, including in wage payments, in accordance with national employment legislation, regardless of ethnic or national origin, race, gender, disability, political belief, creed or religion, or social, cultural or economic background;

52. Promoting equal employment opportunities for young women, ***inter alia***, by adopting and implementing laws against sex-based discrimination in the labour market as well as legislation to guarantee the rights of young women and young men to equal pay for equal work or work of equal value;

53. Improving complementary partnerships among public authorities, the private sector and educational institutions, along with civil society initiatives, for the promotion of youth employment;

54. Promoting research on youth unemployment, taking into account market trends and demands, in order to design and implement youth employment policies and programmes, with due regard to gender-specific circumstances;

55. Investing in the entrepreneurial capacity of young women and young men and providing them with the necessary skills and resources to establish their own enterprises and businesses;

56. Taking effective measures to secure the prohibition and immediate elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including support to the ongoing negotiations towards the finalization by the International Labour Organization of a future instrument addressing this issue, and measures to protect young women and young men against other forms of exploitation, including through sex tourism, prostitution, trafficking in human beings and bondage and any kind of labour, paid or unpaid, which negatively affects their mental, physical, social and moral development, with due regard to the particular situation of young women;

57. Promoting employment-oriented education and training to ensure the constant adjustment of education to the changing social and economic environment, including market needs;

58. Promoting the development of mechanisms for career counselling for youth through educational and training institutions as well as the community;

59. Promoting a greater national and international commitment to the protection of youth migrant workers, with attention to their enjoyment of human rights, their social needs and their prevention from exploitation;

60. Promoting youth entrepreneurship in rural areas with a view to assisting youth to embark on self-managing and self-financing activities;

HEALTH

61. Promoting equal health development for young women and young men, and preventing and responding to health problems by creating safe and supportive environments, providing information and building skills and access to health services, including counselling, involving the family unit, peer groups, schools, media health services and other partners;

62. Combating treatable diseases, and preventing and responding to non-treatable diseases by establishing workable partnerships between developed and developing countries and promoting information and vaccination campaigns, involving the family unit, peer groups, schools, media, health services and other partners in order to build capacity, with special attention to young women and young men;

63. Creating the political, legal, material and social conditions that allow access to basic health care with adequate youth-friendly services and that pay particular attention to information and prevention programmes, with special attention to major diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria, HIV/AIDS, malnutrition, onchocerciasis (river blindness) and diarrhoeal diseases, in particular cholera;

64. Elaborating programmes of information, education, communication and campaign awareness among young women and young men to fight HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases;

65. Recognizing the special health needs of young women and young men with mental or physical disabilities and ensuring their rehabilitation and reintegration in order to promote self-reliance;

66. Promoting humanitarian land-mine activities and increasing land-mine awareness among children and youth, in particular in countries affected by anti-personnel land-mines;

67. Recognizing and supporting the important role of the family unit, youth organizations and non-governmental organizations as the best mechanism to provide an enabling environment for a healthy life through the provision of knowledge, information, skills and motivation;

68. Formulating policies favourable to the development in rural and poor urban areas of health programmes, including safe water supply, sanitation, and waste disposal, taking into account the specific needs of young women and young men for a healthy environment;

69. Recognizing the importance of general health care, including reproductive health care, and establishing a dependable data base on youth reproductive health and providing for information dissemination and for youth-friendly and gender-equitable services in order to ensure the physical, mental and social well being of young women and young men, as well as access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable legal methods of family planning of their choice;

70. Intensifying efforts and actions towards international cooperation concerning health relief under natural disasters and other emergencies;

71. Recognizing the problem of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse and other types of violence against young women and young men, and taking effective measures for their prevention, such as those outlined at the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held in Stockholm from 27 to 31 August 1996;

72. Ensuring full protection of young women and young men from all forms of violence, including gender-based violence, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, and promoting the physical and psychological recovery and the social and economic reintegration of the victim;

DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

73. Recognizing the repeated references to youth in the documents adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem;[9]

74. Raising the awareness of youth, in partnership with young women and young men and youth organizations, of the dangers of drug abuse of both licit and illicit substances and promoting alternatives so that young people can move towards life styles that are healthy and free from substance abuse, and

---

[9] See General Assembly resolutions S-20/2, S-20/3 and S-20/4.

mobilizing the community at different levels to participate fully in drug prevention efforts;

75. Collaborating, in partnership with young women and young men and with youth organizations, on strategies aiming at preventing abuse, reducing the demand for drugs, combating drug abuse and trafficking and promoting support for treatment for and rehabilitation of drug abusers focusing on their social reintegration and for their families;

76. Strengthening international, regional, subregional and bilateral cooperation and increasing efforts towards demand reduction and efforts to fight against illicit production, supply and trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances;

77. Instituting strong measures aimed at restricting and/or preventing access to drugs by young women and young men;

WE WILL THEREFORE AGREE ON THE FOLLOWING

78. To invite all relevant United Nations programmes, funds and the specialized agencies and other bodies within the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization, the World Bank and intergovernmental organizations and regional financial institutions to give greater support to national youth policies and programmes within their country programmes;

79. To promote at the national, regional and international levels research, data collection, statistical compilation and wide dissemination of the findings of such research and studies;

80. To invite the Secretary-General of the United Nations to consider strengthening the Youth Unit of the United Nations Secretariat and to submit proposals to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session on ways and means to achieve that;

81. To invite the Secretary-General of the United Nations to participate actively in the effective follow-up to the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth, bearing in mind General Assembly resolution 52/83 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1997/55 and within the framework of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond;

82. To implement coordinated and cooperative systems among the regional commissions and organizations and ministerial and other meetings in their youth-related activities, and to prepare, to allocate the necessary funding for and to ensure the follow-up of the recommendations of the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth;

83. To urge interested Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to make increased financial contributions to the United Nations Youth Fund and to set up an advisory body to this fund to provide guidance both

on fund raising strategies and on project formulation, implementation and evaluation to follow up the World Conference with specific youth projects;[10]

84. We hereby adopt and commit ourselves as Governments to implement the above-mentioned measures and to foster the further implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, with the active participation of youth, ensuring that young people's unique perspective is reflected in our national policies and programmes.

---

[10] See para. 139 of the Programme of Action (Assembly resolution 50/81, annex).